



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## *Department of Criminal Justice Services*

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### ***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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## **LOCKSMITH SCAMS ALERT**

The Department of Criminal Justice Services urges citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia to be aware that unscrupulous nationwide locksmith businesses and individuals have recently been found to be operating in Virginia. While legitimate locksmith businesses and individuals take great pride in their service and business practices, a persistent pattern of violations by some nationwide businesses has emerged and violations have been reported across the country.

In Virginia, the Department of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Regulatory Affairs has investigated several of these businesses and individuals and taken action against those found to be in violation of the law or regulations governing locksmiths.

The investigations revealed that there are several locksmith businesses and individuals using fictitious names and addresses, and making other misrepresentations. Citizens should be aware of deceptive tactics used by these companies such as quoting one price for services over the telephone but charging a higher price after providing the service. In some cases, they even insist on accompanying the customer to an ATM to withdraw cash for payment of the inflated fee.

All citizens are encouraged to protect themselves from unlicensed businesses and unregistered individuals providing locksmith services. Please see the attached information sheet for steps you can take.



## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE CONTRACTING WITH A LOCKSMITH IN VIRGINIA

**Any business that sells, installs, or services locks must be *licensed* by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).**

- The contract for locksmith services must contain the Department of Criminal Justice Services business license number. This number will begin with "11" followed by a four-digit number. (Example: 11-5432)
- In a situation where you need to call a locksmith for service, insist on a written quote (contract), with a clearly stated price for the service, **before** you agree to have the service performed.
- You can verify the business has a valid license number by visiting our website at [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/ps/directory/rocs/?facility=y](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/ps/directory/rocs/?facility=y) [Facility Search] or by calling the Division of Regulatory Affairs at (804) 786-4700.

**Any individual who sells, installs, or services locks must be *registered* by the Department of Criminal Justice Services.**

- The locksmith who responds to a call for service must present credentials issued by DCJS (photo ID or letter of registration) upon your request.
- If the locksmith cannot produce valid DCJS credentials, we recommend that you do not do business with him..
- You can verify that an individual has a valid registration number by visiting our website at [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/ps/directory/rocs/Search.aspx?facility=N](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/ps/directory/rocs/Search.aspx?facility=N) [License Search] or by calling the Division of Regulatory Affairs at (804) 786-4700.
- If a locksmith attempts to intimidate you or threaten you in any way call the police department immediately.

**If you would like to file a formal complaint with the Department of Criminal Justice Services against a locksmith business or individual, please fill out our complaint form and attach all related documents/contracts/correspondence that support your complaint.**

- A complaint form is available on our website at [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/forms/privatesecurity/pss\\_c.pdf](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/forms/privatesecurity/pss_c.pdf)

For more information about the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Regulatory Affairs, please visit [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/pss/](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/pss/) or contact us via e-mail at [ora.info@dcjs.virginia.gov](mailto:ora.info@dcjs.virginia.gov)